

New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources  
Department



By: Joanna Prukop, Cabinet Secretary

## **Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies**

2009 SUMMER WAFWA Meeting

*Wildlife, Water and Energy: Balancing Our Future*

# **Setting the Stage for Action: The Western Governors' Association Renewable Energy Zone Initiative and Wildlife Council**

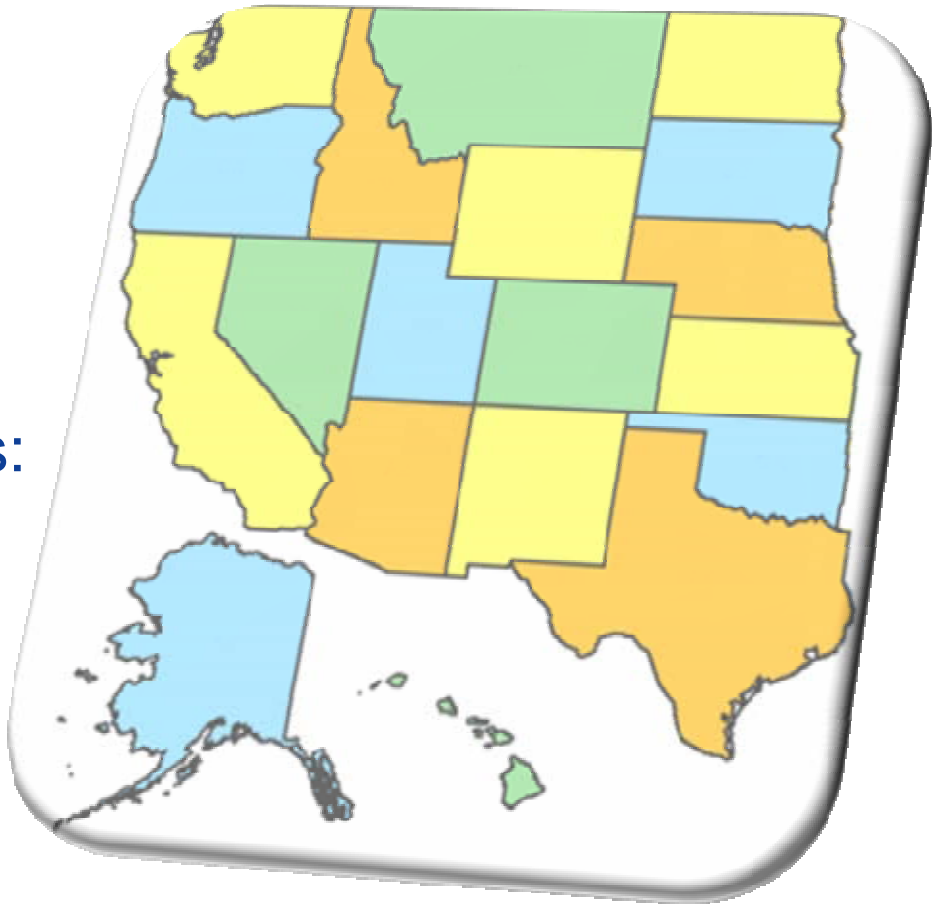
14 July 2009



# Western Governors' Association (WGA)

[www.westgov.org](http://www.westgov.org)

- 19 Western U.S. States
- 3 U.S. Flag Pacific Islands:
  - Guam
  - North Mariana Islands
  - American Samoa





## Wildlife Corridors Initiative



- ❑ **WGA Resolution 07-01** - Protecting Wildlife Migration Corridors and Crucial Wildlife Habitat in the West
- ❑ **Recommendations from Wildlife Corridors Report (2008)**
  - ❑ Establish Western Governors' Wildlife Council (WGWC)
  - ❑ Coordinate and implement state-based Decision Support Systems (DSS)
    - ❑ Address cross-jurisdictional data issues, prioritize identification of crucial habitat and corridors, support climate adaptation efforts
  - ❑ Policies to utilize DSSs in proactive planning to preserve sensitive landscapes
  - ❑ Use WGA Western Renewable Energy Zone initiative as a model for proactive planning



## Western Governors' Wildlife Council (WGWC) Status



*Elk attempt to find safe passage across  
US 550, near Durango, Colorado*

- ❑ December 2008: Council formed and members named
- ❑ December 2008 – June 2009: WREZ initiative pilot
- ❑ May 2009: Subgroup formed to coordinate DSS framework
- ❑ June 2009: MOU signed with Departments of Agriculture, Energy and Interior



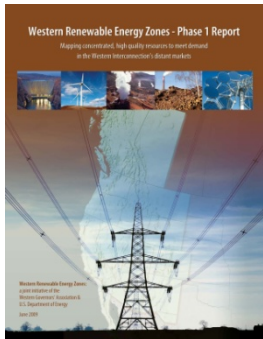
## Recommendations from Wildlife Corridors Report

### **WGWC Membership & Subgroup Activities**

- WGWC Membership
  - High-level officials from State Wildlife Agencies and Governors' offices
- Formation of DSS Subgroup to work on framework for a consistent set of systems within each state
  - State agency Program managers and GIS specialists
- Future efforts to coordinate with non-state partners
  - Federal agencies, NGO community, etc.
- Most Recent Meeting: July 11 in Newport Beach, CA



## Recommendations from Wildlife Corridors Report WREZ Initiative Pilot



**WREZ Goal:** expedite development and delivery of clean energy from areas of the West with vast renewable resources.

- WGWC asked to categorize wildlife sensitivity to renewable energy development within identified resource areas.



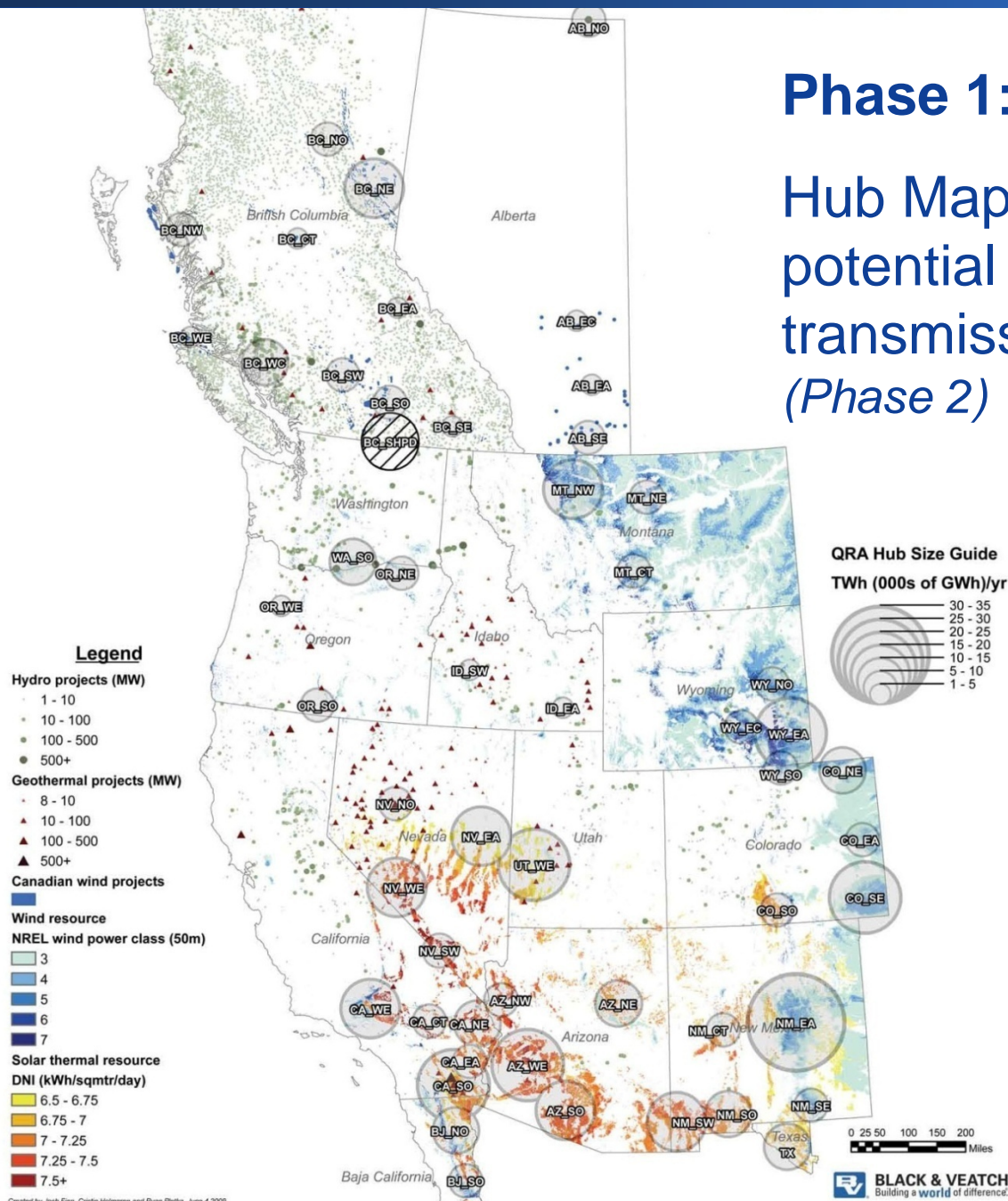
## Recommendations from Wildlife Corridors Report WREZ Initiative Pilot

- Most of 11 WREZ states provided GIS data layers for sensitive wildlife categorized as:
  - High sensitive
  - Sensitive
  - Insufficient data
  
- No stakeholder recommendation on development potential in sensitive areas, however some states chose to discount energy potential in wildlife sensitive areas



## Phase 1: Defining the WREZs

Hub Map showing energy potential estimates to use in transmission planning models  
(Phase 2)



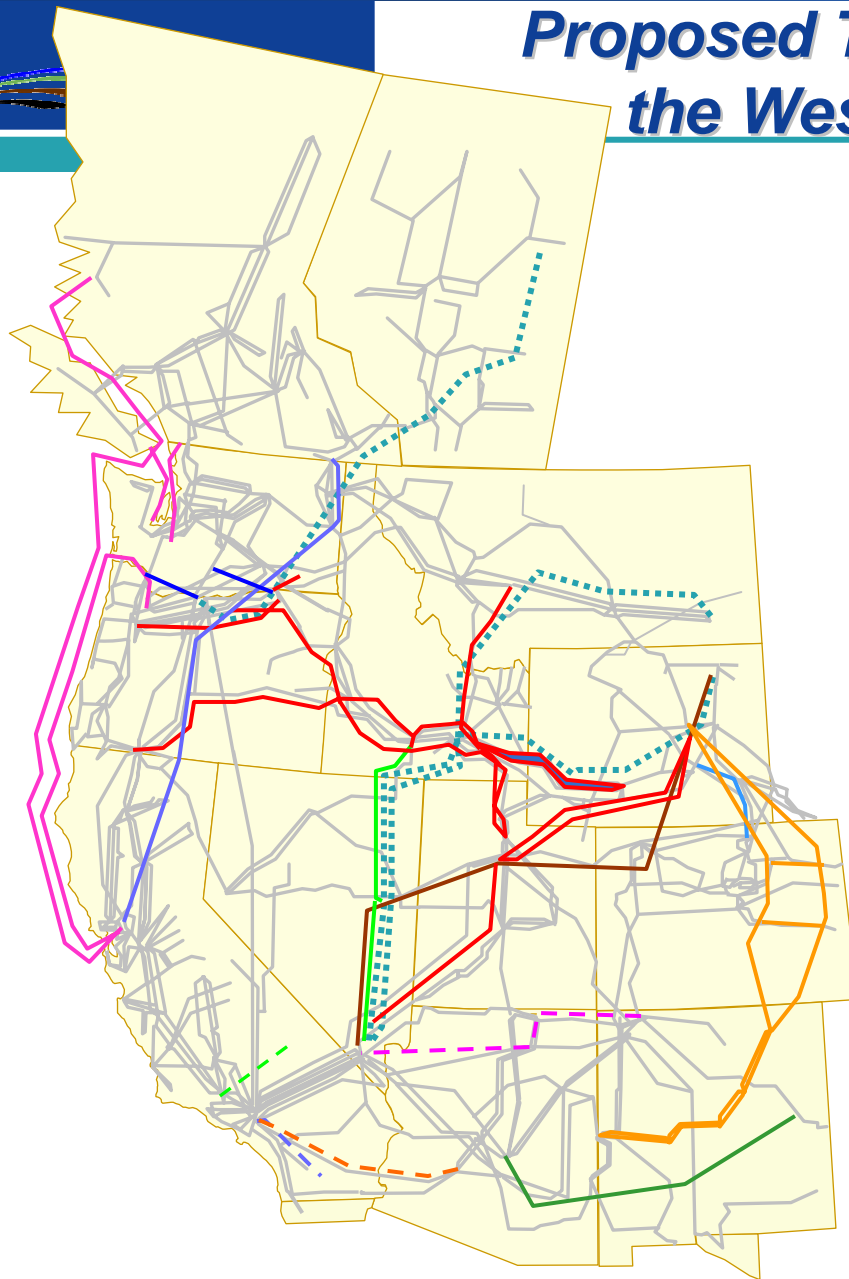
**Future WREZ work:**  
finalize and clarify  
state categorizations  
& future inputs into  
transmission  
development





## Proposed Transmission Projects in the Western Interconnection

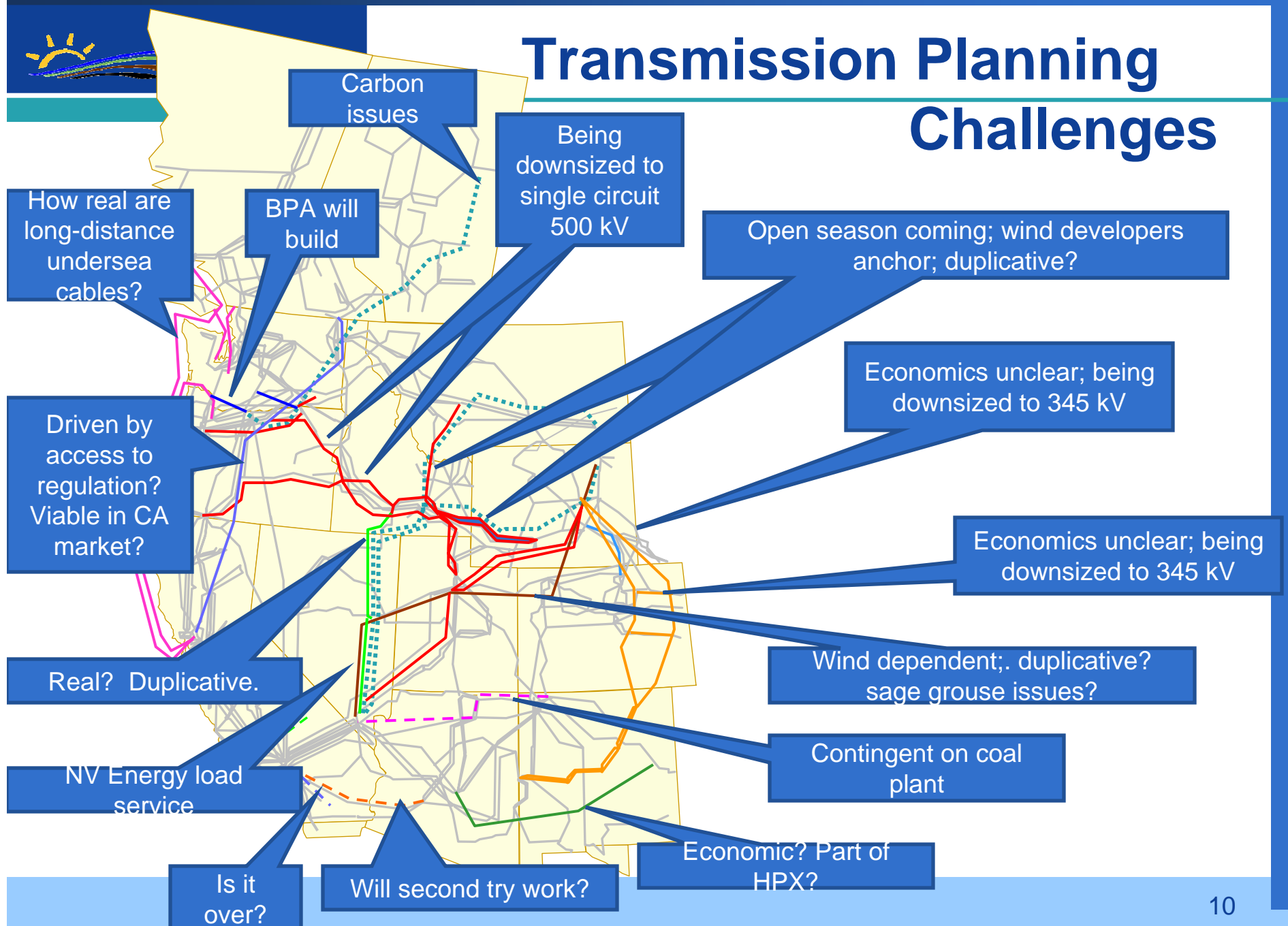
*Note: This plot includes selected projects from Table 3.2 of 2008 TEPPC Study Plan(v7)  
Projects have been grouped to simplify coding.*



- Sea Breeze Projects
- ..... TransCanada Projects
- Gateway & Other NTTG Projects
- Columbia Grid Projects
- TransWest Express
- LS Power & Great Basin Projects
- WY-CO Intertie Project
- High Plains Express
- Sun-ZIA
- Canada/PacNW-NoCalif
- - - Central CA Clean Energy (C3ET)
- - - Green Path North
- - - Devers-Palo Verde 2
- - - Navajo Transmission Project



# Transmission Planning Challenges





## WREZ Phase 2: Forging Transmission Plans

- Finalize the Modeling Tool
- Incorporate the Modeling Tool
- Establish Close Coordination
- Corridor Siting



## Phase 3: Coordinating Energy Purchasing from the WREZs

- Stakeholders will work to bring state and provincial utility commissions, utilities and generators together to increase the coordination of power purchasing to facilitate development of a region-wide market for renewable power.



## Phase 4: Fostering Interstate Cooperation for Renewable Energy Generation and Transmission

- Address:
  1. Cost allocation issues (*streamline/coordinate inter-jurisdictional*)
  2. Siting
  3. Permitting processes
- Facilitate collaboration:
  - Among the private sector and regulators to advance the goals of the WREZ initiative.



# Federal Legislation

- **The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009** AKA House Bill 2454, or the Waxman-Markey bill, passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 219-212 on June 26, 2009.
  - It establishes national limits on greenhouse gases, creates a complex trading system for emission permits and provide incentives to alter how individuals and corporations use energy.
  - The bill, if it became law, would lead to vast changes in the ways energy is made, sold and used in the United States -- putting new costs over time on electricity from fossil fuels and directing new billions to "clean" power from sources such as the wind and the sun.
- **Senator Harry Reid (D-NV)** introduced on 3/5/09 **S. 539** Clean Renewable Energy and Economic Development Act
  - A bill to amend the Federal Power Act to require the President to designate certain geographical areas as national renewable energy zones, and for other purposes.



# Department of Interior

- ‘Fast-Track’ Initiatives for Solar Energy Development on Western Lands
  - Federal agencies will work with western leaders to designate tracts of public lands in the West as prime zones for utility-scale solar energy development
  - Fund environmental studies
  - Open new solar energy permitting offices and
  - Speed reviews of industry proposals.





# Recommendations from Wildlife Corridors Report

## Memorandum of Understanding

*"We urge the Secretaries to have their agencies work closely with our [wildlife] council in developing these systems to help minimize impacts to the wildlife that are such a vital part of our Western heritage, landscape and economy."*

*-Governor Brian Schweitzer,*

*Chairman, WGA*

- June 15, 2009 Western Governors signed a MOU with Departments of Agriculture, Energy and Interior.
  - Federal/State coordination on developing state-based DSSs.
  - Utilization of data from all sectors and coordinated process for data standardization.
  - Naming of contacts for state and federal coordination.



## Opportunities & Support Activities

- Stimulate capacity building for centralized data management within states
- DSS Sub-group membership/participation
- Encourage states and their partners to contribute to and use the DSSs
- Support state staffing and data structure
- Partner in developing additional pilot projects to demonstrate efficacy of DSSs.

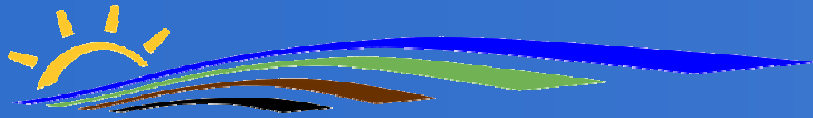


For more information, please visit

[www.westgov.org/initiatives/corridors](http://www.westgov.org/initiatives/corridors)

<http://www.westgov.org/wga/initiatives/wrez/>

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# Questions and Answers